Recommendations of T.L. Shankar Committee

*325. SHRIMATI PREMA CARIAPPA:
SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether a Parliamentary Committee has criticized the Ministry for failing to ensure development of captive coal blocks by the allocattees and demanded that such blocks be de-allocated if they continued to remain unutilized;

(b) if so, the other recommendations made by the Committee;

(c) whether an experts' Committee headed by T.L. Shankar had submitted the second part of the report to the Centre on coal sector reforms;

(d) whether Government have accepted the recommendations; and

(e) the steps being taken to implement them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (DR. DASARI NARAYANA, RAO): (a) The Standing Committee on Coal and Steel had observed in their 23rd report on Demand for Grants (2007-08) that some of the coal blocks allotted as early as 1998 to 2000 have still not been developed and only 8 blocks have started producing coal. The Ministry of Coal in its reply to the Committee had, *inter-alia*, stated that out of the 19 coal blocks allotted up to 2002, 11 have already come into production and 6 more are expected to commence production during 2007-08. The Committee was further informed that the position has since improved on account of measures taken by the Ministry such as intensive monitoring being done on a regular basis, prescription of time-bound milestones, introduction of bank guarantee deposit system etc.

(b) The Committee had, *inter-alia*, recommended as below:

(i) Simplification of procedure for allocation of coal blocks and facilitation of various approvals such as previous approval by the Central Government and grant of mining lease by State Government.

(ii) Coal Controller's Office should be strengthened adequately so that they could monitor the progress as provided under the rules and take corrective steps.

(iii) Issue of notice to both public and private companies asking them to develop the coal blocks within a stipulated time failing which the coal blocks allocated to them would be de-allocated.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) and (e) Do not arise in view of the answer given to part (c) of the question.